

## HOW COMMUNITIES WILL BENEFIT

- Greater respect for the conservation commission
- Proactive natural resource protection
- Sound, defensible permitting decisions
- Increased commission professionalism

## INSTRUCTORS AND MATERIALS

All sessions are taught by expert instructors. Attendees receive a packet of relevant course materials for each unit session. *Protecting Wetlands and Open Space: MACC's Environmental Handbook for Massachusetts Conservation Commissioners* is the central text and is available as an online subscription.

## WHEN AND WHERE

Each of the eight course units is offered regularly at convenient locations around the state. Some units are now offered in a webinar format. Units are generally given in pairs; most are 2 1/2 hours in length.

## ABOUT MACC

Founded in 1961, the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions provides educational programs, a regular newsletter and numerous publications to keep conservation commissioners current on relevant environmental law, science and policy.

For a current course  
schedule contact:

MACC

10 Juniper Road • Belmont MA 02478

617.489.3930

[www.maccweb.org](http://www.maccweb.org)

## WHAT THE EXPERTS HAVE TO SAY

"Information is power. Conservation commissioners who care about environmental protection will arm themselves with the tools to make the law work in their favor."

*Arleen O'Donnell*

*Former Deputy Commissioner for Policy & Planning*

*Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection*

"We believe that the more knowledgeable conservation commissioners are in implementing the Wetlands Protection Act, the better served are the interests of their community and the environment. We applaud MACC for initiating this training program."

*Richard E. Long*

*President*

*BSC Group, Inc.*

"Open space protection depends on mapping, planning and inventory skills. This course will provide a foundation in these important techniques."

*Joel Lerner*

*Former Director, Division of Conservation Services  
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs*

"Training in law, science and policy is essential for commissions to receive the respect and credibility they deserve."

*Gregor I. McGregor, Esq.*

*McGregor & Associates, P.C.*

*Former Mass. Assistant Attorney General*

# Fundamentals for Conservation Commissioners

## A Certificate Training Course



Presented by the  
Massachusetts Association of  
Conservation Commissions

## ABOUT THIS CERTIFICATE COURSE

This eight-unit course for conservation commissioners, staff and anyone who wants a solid grounding in commission work, provides the basics of: commissions' responsibilities and operations; open space planning, protection and management; and wetlands and wetlands permitting. Upon completion, attendees receive a certificate and their communities are notified of their accomplishment.

## WHAT COMMISSIONERS WILL LEARN

- How to administer the Wetlands Protection Act (G. L. Ch. 131 §40) effectively
- How to acquire and manage open space
- How to interact positively with other town boards and departments
- How to get the necessary information on a site inspection
- Land protection techniques
- What it takes to run an effective meeting
- Plan and map reading skills
- The scientific functions of wetlands and their values
- How to write orders of conditions
- Identification and inventory of natural resources
- An understanding of the Open Meeting Law and Public Records Law
- Local and regional open space planning

## Outline of Course Units

### Unit 1

- *Overview of Conservation Commissions: Relationships, Responsibilities, Funds and Fees*
- Duties and authority
- Federal and state agencies
- Town boards
- Conflict of Interest Law, Open Meeting Law
- Town budget, filing and consultant fees

### Unit 2

- *Getting Home Before Midnight: How to Run an Effective Meeting*
- Meeting preparation
- Participants and their interests
- Group dynamics
- Record keeping, Public Records Law
- Communication techniques

### Unit 3

- *The Wetlands Protection Act: Fundamentals, Process and Procedures*
- Interests of the Act, Jurisdiction
- Permit submittal requirements, Forms
- Simplified Review
- Identifying resource areas
- "Limited" projects

### Unit 4

- *Plan Review and Site Visit Procedures (includes field session)*
- Understanding maps and plans
- Field Session:
  - What to bring
  - Soils, slopes and wetland lines
  - Erosion and sedimentation control

### Unit 5

- *Wetland Functions and Values*
- Common vegetated wetlands in Massachusetts
- Scientific v. regulatory wetlands definition
- Functions, characteristics and watershed context
- Performance standards
- Buffer zones

### Unit 6

- *Writing Effective Orders of Conditions*
- Protecting interests of the Act
- Boilerplate and special conditions
- Denials and appeals
- Amendments and extensions
- Certificates of compliance

### Unit 7

- *Open Space Planning and Protection Techniques*
- Establishing goals and objectives
- Inventory of local natural resources
- Selecting parcels, working with landowners
- Conservation restrictions
- Funding and grants

### Unit 8

- *Managing Conservation Land: Inventories, Goals and Conflicts*
- Resource evaluation
- Management plans
- Management case studies (e.g. invasives, trails, grasslands, agriculture, beavers)